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July 27, 2007

The Honorable John Dingell
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Pete Stark
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Rangel
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Dingell, Pallone, Stark and Rangel:

On behalf of the American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA), I write to convey ADHA's strong and enthusiastic support for H.R. 3162, the Children's Health and Medicare Protection Act of 2007 (CHAMP Act), which would reauthorize and strengthen the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).

ADHA is particularly pleased that the CHAMP Act includes a federal guarantee for a SCHIP dental benefit as well as other important dental provisions, including a directive to the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) to study the "feasibility and appropriateness of using qualified mid-level dental health providers, in coordination with dentists, to improve access for children to oral health services and public health overall."

Although dental caries (tooth decay) is fully preventable, dental caries remains the most common chronic disease among children – five times more common than asthma. The death in suburban Maryland last month of twelve-year old Deamonte Driver from complications of an abscessed tooth provided all of us a tragic reminder that lack of access to oral health services can have serious – even fatal – consequences. The CHAMP Act will improve access to dental care, a vital but too often overlooked part of health care.

ADHA also supports the CHAMP Act's proposed increase in excise taxes on tobacco products, which will decrease the number of children who start smoking and encourage children who already smoke to quit. Every day another 2,000 kids become regular smokers, one-third of whom will

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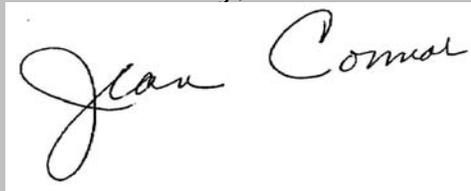
die prematurely as a result. ADHA is committed to tobacco cessation efforts, including our nationwide campaign entitled "Ask. Advise. Refer."

In response to the call of workforce experts and the Surgeon General to enhance the oral health workforce capacity, ADHA is working to establish a new oral health care provider, the "Advanced Dental Hygiene Practitioner." This new provider would provide preventive, therapeutic and minimally invasive restorative services directly to underserved Americans. The Advanced Dental Hygiene Practitioner would be a member of a comprehensive health care team, and would refer to dentists those patients in need of more advanced oral health care services. This new provider would be state-licensed and would complete not only an accredited dental hygiene program but a masters level program. ADHA looks forward to GAO review of the Advanced Dental Hygiene Practitioner and other oral health care providers.

ADHA is the largest organization representing the nation's more than 120,000 dental hygienists. Dental hygienists are preventive oral health professionals, licensed in each of the fifty states, who are vitally concerned about the nation's oral health, a fundamental part of total health

ADHA applauds your leadership in working to improve children's health. We also salute the outstanding work of committee staff Bridgett Taylor and Amy Hall. ADHA is committed to working toward enactment of the CHAMP Act. Please do not hesitate to contact me or our Washington Counsel Karen S. Sealander of McDermott Will & Emery at 202.756.8024 or ksealander@mwe.com with questions or for further information or assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jean Connor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "J".

ADHA President Jean Connor, RDH

cc: House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer
ADHA Board of Trustees
ADHA Executive Director Ann Battrell, RDH, MSDH
ADHA Director of Governmental Affairs Tim Lynch
ADHA Washington Counsel Karen Sealander